

REMARKS

In the Office Action, dated May 9, 2003, the Examiner states that Claims 1 and 2 are pending and Claims 1 and 2 are rejected. By the present Amendment, Applicant amends the claims.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Fujita (US 4,594,923) in view of Nishigaito (JP 63196314) and British reference GB 1,074,662. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with and traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 has been clarified to state that the claimed method is for a synthetic resin sheet for a lens which is carried out immediately after the heating step in the manufacturing process. According to the presently claimed invention the method is specifically for a synthetic resin sheet for a lens such as a Fresnel lens or a lenticular lens.

Fujita relates to a controller for cutting sheet material in which a useless short piece of sheet material produced at the starting of a shear in the prior art is not produced. Such a controller is used in an apparatus for continuously manufacturing corrugated cardboard so as to prevent the useless short piece of corrugated cardboard from being generated when removing an inferior portion or making an order change operation (see Fujita, column 1, lines 4-31). The apparatus for continuously manufacturing the corrugated cardboard includes a rotary cutter for cutting the corrugated cardboard into a piece having a predetermined size and a shear, which is provided on the upstream side of the rotary cutter, to remove a useless short piece of the corrugated cardboard. Operating the shear under no specific control when removing an inferior portion of the corrugated cardboard or making the order change operation, and then carrying out the cutting operation by means of the rotary cutter, may generate a useless piece of corrugated cardboard having insufficient size. Fujita's invention solves such a problem. More specifically, operation of the shear is controlled so that a cut portion of the corrugated cardboard first cut by the shear coincides with a cut portion of the corrugated cardboard cut by the rotary cutter.

However, Fujita discloses or suggests nothing about the steps (a) to (d) of the current Claim 1, and especially nothing about compensation for expansion of the sheet material. It should be particularly noted that the sheet material, i.e., the corrugated cardboard, does not substantially expand, and as a result, there is substantially no reason for consideration of compensation for expansion of the sheet material in Fujita.

Nishigaito relates to a device for dividing a steel rod to be hot-rolled, by a flying shear, which enhances the degree of accuracy in setting the length of division of the steel rod. It should first be noted, as stated in the Response dated April 14, 2003, that the temperature change in the steel bar in Nishigaito is on the magnitude of thousands of degrees centigrade, and in contrast, the temperature change in the synthetic resin sheet in the present invention is only tens of degrees centigrade.

2 (There is substantially no room for consideration of compensation for expansion of the sheet material in Fujita. Therefore, the Applicant considers it impossible, without inventive activity, to apply Nishigaito's method for cutting the steel rod, which is heated to an extremely high temperature, to Fujita's method for cutting the corrugated cardboard, in which there is no need to consider compensation for expansion of the corrugated cardboard.

The British reference relates to methods and apparatus for preparing a thermoplastic sheet for differential pressure forming. However, the British reference does not teach heating the sheet with expansion-adjusted cutting on a synthetic resin sheet, as admitted by the Examiner. In addition, the British reference relates to a thermoplastic sheet, while Nishigaito relates to a steel rod, which is heated to an extremely high temperature at which a thermoplastic sheet would melt and decompose. As a result, the Applicant considers that it would not be obvious to combine the British reference's method and Nishigaito's method. The combination of only Fujita with the British reference lacks the fundamental step of heating with expansion-adjusted cutting on the synthetic resin sheet.

The European reference (0 022 160) describes dimensional changes of a plastic workpiece. However, this reference does not disclose heating with expansion-adjusted cutting on a synthetic resin sheet. Accordingly, the European

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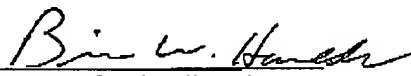
reference provides no material by which the subject matter of the present invention may be denied.

As is clear from the foregoing, the combination of Fujita cited as the primary reference, and Nishigaito, the British reference and the European reference, which are cited as secondary references, neither disclose nor suggest the subject matter of the present invention claimed in the currently amended Claim 1. Therefore, Applicant considers that the subject matter of the currently amended Claim 1 has patentability over Fujita in view of Nishigaito and the British reference.

In light of the foregoing response, all the outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome. Applicant respectfully submits that this application should now be in better condition for allowance and respectfully requests favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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